

AFSCME LOCAL 1668

Volume 5, issue 5
May 2011



Hey did you know? We're on the web and Facebook:

Afscme.org and facebook.com/afscme1668

Thought for the Month:
It's good to have a job

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President's Report

'All you hear is how public employees have "Cadillac's" health insurance and massive retirement plans.'

Hello once again Local 1668! I hope this month's newsletter finds all of you healthy and happy, although the current political climate in Michigan doesn't leave us much to be happy about. But we can't always dwell on the negative; there are plenty of things to be thankful for.

Recently there was a Maintenance wide meeting held at the Fetzer Center. In this meeting, it was pointed out that the members of that division represent 428 years of seniority at WMU. That is awesome! That is what AFSCME brings to the table. I use that as just one specific example of how we are a group of dedicated, loyal and professional people that provide vital services to the WMU students and community as a whole. This is true for all divisions of our union. We are hearing too much about how the public employees are bankrupting our state and how we are the problem. Well I say nothing could be further from the truth. It is not the working people of our great state that have created the financial shortfalls. We have earned everything we receive by being the type of employees that bring dedication to the job. We care about our stu-

dents and our university, and we deliver quality service for a fair price. None of us are getting rich working for WMU. None of us get six figure incomes, cars to drive, expense accounts, houses to live in. We are not the ones responsible for the ship becoming so top heavy. And, most importantly, we do not receive anything that wasn't fairly negotiated and mutually agreed upon. We need to make sure that everyone knows the truth, and we need to do our part to stop the lies.

How do we do this? By communicating with our community, and getting accurate information out there. All you hear is how public employees have "Cadillac's" health insurance and massive retirement plans. You don't hear how we negotiated the plans we have with the six figure folks. You don't hear that maybe those negotiations included lower pay increases to maintain the level of benefits. The governor of our state out right lied, and eventually admitted to it, when he put out the claim that public employees make way more than their counterparts in the private sector. Many studies have shown what a lie that was. A well respected professor from Rutgers University said that Snyder's numbers were impossible! And his study showed that in all but one category out of about six, a public employee made significantly

less than their private sector counterpart. And in the one category that was higher, it was by just a couple thousand a year, hardly enough to make a difference.

These are the lies that we need to stop. We need to stand together, or we will surely fall together. We need to get active, get loud, and get the message to our legislators that we will not be sacrificed so that the millionaires can become billionaires! Please, everyone, let's stand for our rights, and let's not go down without a fight. We can win this! Polls are showing that we have the majority of public opinion on our side. Contact the union office to find out what you can do to protect not only your job and way of life, but those of all the dedicated, hard working middle class people in our state and our country. We can't allow Michigan to become one of the first dominos to fall in the attempt to do away with the middle class in this country. This is our state, our country, and we need to make sure that our government at all levels is reminded that they work for us. Our government is supposed to be of the people, for the people.

In solidarity,
Dennis

Chief Steward's Report

There should be NO Temps working past Friday, April 29, 2011. Students should only be working 20 hours per week. We still have Dining Service employees on summer lay off. We have been informed of a little more work availability that we will be meeting about shortly. So this may bring some much needed good news to a few more people.

We have been extremely busy with grievance handling at the 3rd step level. I am preparing several cases for possible arbitration. We are waiting on some other grievance answers. We had three grievances denied that were related to loss of Holiday pay, after individuals called Annual Leave or FMLA. One of these involved an employee who had been off for over a month on FMLA prior to the Holiday Break and returned to work on her 1st scheduled day back and they were denied all 6 Holidays. We intend to submit all of these to arbitration consideration by Council 25. We were denied the grievance dealing with the positions posting and improper filling of vacancies. We will be sending that grievance to Arbitration consideration by Council 25. We will also be sending the Closure policy grievance from Trades to Council 25 for Arbitration consideration.

WE heard the grievance that dealt with the multiple changes to our Health Insurance plan. The University claims that the changes were federally mandated and that because of these changes the contract had to be changed. There has been official communication to the Union or its employees that these changes have occurred, and apparently the rest of the University was unaware as well, as they stated that this came as a surprise to them. Our contract specially states that our plan remains in effect as written for the remainder of our contract. They have

to negotiate any changes to the contract with us. IF you are having problems with you coverage's, in that something that used to be covered is not covered or has changed since last year, we want to hear from you! We are preparing to take further action if necessary. We have already been in contact with Council 25 for next steps; however we have not received an answer as we just heard this grievance last Wednesday.

We have not received any official word on how the budget cuts are going to affect us at this point. Anything that you may have heard is just speculation and rumor. With that in mind, let's all try to be mindful of what we are doing and saying to others. If there were ever a time to stand in Unity and Solidarity, it is now. We encourage each and every one of you to become more proactive by writing letters to the editor, writing letters to the legislatures, calling your representatives and senators about the issues surrounding working people, and our fellow neighbors. The Governor signed the Emergency Financial Manager package into law on March 16.

They legislature continues to pass laws every day, that effect your wallet, wages, benefits, security, voting rights, and over all well being. This is NOT just a UNION battle; this is a dictatorship of everyday, working class people. This law is absolutely horrible for the State of Michigan. We need more voices. We are in for the fight of our lives across this state and across the country. We need your help. There has been an all out war declared against unions and the working class people. The Governor has proposed serious cuts that will affect our livelihood and make it extremely easy to appoint these emergency managers to local government and boards.

We need everyone to call 1-888-793-3601 right now and enter you

zip code when prompted. You will automatically be connected with your representative. Tell them to vote NO on the Governor's Budget! Your voting rights are under attack.

Please go to one or more of these websites and stay connected and take action when asked too. Many have sign ups available so they can keep in contact with you via email. If you text, Text the word AFSCME to 237263. Check out some of these websites for more information.

www.moveon.org www.afscme.org
www.miafscme.org www.aflcio.org
www.miaaflcio.org (this site has a legislative update linked to it which is updated almost daily and it has a "take action" link as well) www.facebook.com/afscme1668
join our facebook page for quick and easy information. www.afscme1668.org is our website, here you can request for a free email account and then be sure to share your email address by emailing: chiefsteward@afscme1668.org. Other sites to visit are <http://www.facebook.com/pages/South-Central-Michigan-Community-Action-Team/195190330521090> Join the We are the People:

www.wrongformichigan.org Join Working Michigan on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Working-Michigan/206372732710668>

Communication is the best way to stay informed of the real issues that are affecting you in the work place.

We need to be the very best we can be and should always do the very best anyone can. I know I am getting preachy, but this is serious, come to work, and do your job the very best you can! Public employees (that's us) are under attack and we have a huge fight on our hands! Now is not the time to be ignorant of the rules.

In Solidarity,

Kathi Babbitt

AFSCME LOCAL 1668 COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

Is holding their

1st ANNUAL DIPES & WIPES DRIVE

IT WILL BE FOR THE ENTIRE MONTH OF JUNE

we will be collecting diapers, wet wipes, or money to purchase these items.

This will benefit the Family & Children's Services. Please bring donations to the following members:

Carol Case (Landscape); Juanita Snell (BCSS) Tory Kennedy (MAINT.) Carolyn Wiley (D.S.). Or the Union Hall By June 30th 2011.

Petition Circulators Needed!!!!!!!

Contact President Dennis Moore at the union office if you would like to help defend

Very soon a petition to place Public Act 4 (Emergency Manager) to a referendum vote will be hitting the streets. In case you don't know, this is the legislation that grants total authority to an Emergency Manager of a municipality or school district that falls into economic hardship. This manager is appointed by the Treasurer, who is appointed by the governor, and literally has dictator control of all aspects of the local government or school board. They can even dismiss the authority of the locally elected officials. This recently happened in Benton Harbor: the emergency manager revoked all authority of the city commission, except the power to call a meeting to order, approve the agenda, and adjourn the meeting. All other city business will be done by the appointed manager. Is your town next? The news just reported that the city of Jackson is in line for this to happen. It will happen to most of us eventually, especially if Gov. Snyder's budget passes as presented. A local government only needs to be ten thousand dollars in the red to qualify. Is this democracy? Hell no its not! We already had avenues to deal with elected officials that are not doing their job properly. It is up to the people of the community to decide what is best for their town. Not some corporate stooge who is owed a favor by the millionaire governor.

Please keep your eyes open for these petitions, and sign one if you agree that our local governments belong to the people. We also are seeking volunteer to take petitions around and collect signatures. Contact Dennis at the union office if you would like to help defend democracy in our state. We only need to collect about 160,000 signatures to force this issue to a vote of the people, as it should be. If the signatures are obtained, this legislation will be stayed until such time that the people vote on it. No additional municipalities can be taken over.

Please consider stepping up and helping! This is our fight, and we need to fight hard. If you can collect signatures in your community; church, clubs, golf league, bowling alley, wherever like minded people can be found, please call the union office at 381-1668 and let me know. I will get you the necessary information and petitions as soon as they become available. The target date for kicking off this petition drive is June 4.

Thanks!

Please call 381-1668. if no answer please leave a detailed message on the answering machine.

Vice President's Report

We are working for you

Hello Everyone

On May 18th Carol Wiley Earl Audi Conner and I attended a Secretary-Treasurer Educational Workshop in Grand Rapid MI. Sponsored by our own Council 25. International had a couple of Speakers from Washington come in and teach us how to fill out forms for receipts journals, disbursements journal, monthly financial reports, and expense reports. It is safe to say that our Financial secretary is well informed on the financial business

for local 1668. If you want any further information such as copies of the financial reports we do please fill free to come to the Union hall the first Thursday of each month

T-Shirts

T-Shirts are available for you to wear on Wednesdays if you would like to buy a T-shirt for nine dollars please contact your divisional. They can either get you one or direct you to some one who can or call the Union Hall at 269-381-1668 and leave a message. You can also come to a Union meeting and buy one and while you're there have a seat and listen to all what's going on throughout the university, state, even coun-

try.

Golf outing next month

I am excited about the golf outing next month I hope everyone will come out and join the fun, and if you don't golf then come out and have fun watching. For you new brothers and sisters this is a time to come out and mingle with your brothers and sisters from other departments on campus. Until next time, take care.

Val Armstrong VP

Local 1668

Date: 06-18-11



We Make WMU

4 person teams,
must include at
least one **Local
1668** member per
team

7th Annual Golf Outing

States Golf Course

20 East W Ave Vicksburg

\$40.00/person in-
cludes 18 holes golf,

Register by May 13

for chance to win entry fee back!!!!

Games on



Cash Drawings

50/50

Door Prizes



Come on out and enjoy a fun day
of golf and games with your un-



List Team members and return to Dennis (Maint Reg 3) or Bryan (Maint Reg 4)

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____